

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:-

1. photofinishing system comprising:

5 a) a digital processor, a printer and means for feeding print media to the printer from a roll of the print media; the digital processor being arranged to receive digitised data that is representative of a photographic image and to process the data in a manner to generate a printer drive signal that is representative of the photographic image, the printer being
10 coupled to the digital processor and being arranged to process the drive signal and effect printing of the photographic image on the print media as it is fed to the printer from the roll, and provided as an integrated component of the photofinishing system,
b) means for providing controlled chemical development and subsequent printing of exposed photographic film.

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2. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 wherein means are provided to scan and process images carried by developed film to produce a printer drive signal for feeding to the printer that is coupled to the digital processor

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3. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the roll of print media is provided by way of a replaceable cartridge.

4. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 3 wherein the cartridge
25 is arranged to be mounted removably in juxtaposition to the printer and wherein the cartridge incorporates means for coupling with a print media feed drive mechanism.

5. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least one
30 printing fluid is provided for the printer by way of at least one replaceable printing fluid cartridge.

6. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the printing fluid cartridge is arranged to be mounted removably in juxtaposition to the printer.

5 7. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 and comprising:
a primary cartridge that is arranged to be mounted removably in
juxtaposition to the printer, the primary cartridge housing the roll of print
media to be fed to the printer and incorporating means for coupling with a
print media feed drive mechanism, and at least one refillable secondary
10 cartridge carried by the primary cartridge, the secondary cartridge
containing printing ink to be delivered to the printer.

8. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 7 wherein the roll of
print media is removably mounted to a tubular core of the primary
15 cartridge and
wherein the at least one secondary cartridge is removably located within
the tubular core.

9. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the digital
20 processor is arranged to receive said digitised data from an input source
selected from a scanning device, a computer disk, a digital camera output,
a digital camera memory card, a digital file and an internet connection.

10. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 wherein said digitised
25 data is input to the digital processor as a standardised image compression
signal and processed as JPEG files.

11. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer
comprises at least one print head assembly.
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12. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 11 wherein the printer
comprises two confronting, spaced-apart print head assemblies.

13. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 12 wherein the print head assemblies are arranged selectively to direct printing fluid onto at least one face of print media from the roll of print media.

5 14. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 12 wherein each print head assembly comprises at least one print head module, each of which comprises a unitary arrangement of:

a) a support member,

10 b) at least four micro-electromechanical integrated circuit print head chips, each of which has a plurality of nozzles to and from which the printing fluid is delivered,

c) a fluid distribution arrangement mounting each of the print head chips to the support member, and

15 d) a connector for connecting electrical power and signals to each of the print head chips.

15. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 14 wherein the at least one print head module is removably located in a channel portion of a casing and wherein the casing contains electrical circuitry for controlling delivery of electrical power and drive signals to the print head chips by way of the connector.

16. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 and further comprising a drier means located in series with the printer, the drier means being arranged to receive printed media directly from the printer and comprising:

a) guide rollers for transporting the print media through the drier means, and

30 b) at least one blower arranged to direct drying air onto at least one face of print media as it is transported through the dryer means.

17. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 and further comprising a slitter means located in series with the printer, the slitter

means being arranged to receive printed media following its passage through the printer, to transport the printed media in a longitudinal direction away from the printer and to slit the printed media In the longitudinal direction of transportation of the printed media.

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18. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 17 wherein the slitter means comprises:

a) guide rollers for transporting the print media through the slitter means,

10 b) spaced-apart slitting blades mounted on rotatable shafts, and

c) a rotatable, selectively positional turret supporting the rotatable shafts.

19. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 17 and further
15 including a guillotine mounted to the slitter means, the guillotine being selectively actuatable to cut the print media at selected intervals.

20. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the processor and the printer are mounted to a support structure and wherein a primary
20 cartridge containing a replaceable said roll of the print media is removably mounted to the support structure.

21. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 20 wherein the support structure includes a compartment and the primary cartridge is removably
25 located in the compartment.

22. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 20 wherein print media feed means are located in the primary cartridge and drive means are provided on the support structure and are arranged to couple with the feed
30 means to effect feeding of the print media through the printer when the primary cartridge is mounted to the support structure.

21. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 20 wherein a paper feed drive mechanism is mounted to the compartment and is arranged to engage a said roll of the print media.

5 22. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 21 wherein a door is provided in a wall portion of the primary cartridge and wherein the door is arranged to be opened to enable the paper feed drive mechanism to engage the roll of print media.

10 23. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 22 wherein the paper feed drive mechanism comprises a pivotal carrier, a first drive motor arranged to impart pivotal drive to the carrier, a primary drive roller mounted to the carrier and arranged to engage the roll of print media when the door in the primary cartridge is open, and a second drive motor
15 arranged to impart rotary drive to the primary roller.

24. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 22 wherein the print media feed means include a drive roller and a pinch roller, and wherein the drive means comprises a third drive motor which is mounted to the
20 support structure.

25. A photofinishing system as claimed in claim 14 wherein the print head assembly is arranged to effect printing of the print media with a feed rate up to 2 metres per second.

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26. A digital photofinishing system as claimed in claim 25 wherein the print head assembly has a width within the range 150 to 1250 mm and print head chips numbering between 8 and 64.

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